Landscape Stewardship Initiative

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CT DEP

Landscape Stewardship Initiative

- Coordinate and focus DEP programs that influence land development
- Offer assistance to municipalities, watershed associations, land trusts and others making land use decisions
- Ensure DEP land management decisions set a positive example
- Build a public constituency for sustainable development

Goals

- Partner with regional, municipal and private entities to promote sustainable development
- Make DEP decisions consistent with growth management principles established in the revised 2005 state plan of conservation and development
- Encourage state and local policy, investment and land use decisions in support of natural resource protection
- Support local conservation leaders

Why DEP? Why now?

- Protect state investment in 250,000 acres of conservation land
- Mission to conserve wildlife, fish and other natural resources affected by land development
- Wide range of programs related to land development (wastewater, coastal planning, brownfields, etc)
- Unique expertise to contribute (e.g. wildlife management, hydrology, geology, forest management)
- New state law on growth management HB#6570
- Revised 2005 state conservation and development plan with growth management principles

Growth Management Principles

- Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure
- Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs
- Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options
- Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources and Traditional Rural Lands
- Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety
- Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis

Connecticut Growth Facts

- From 1985 through 2002 the Urban Footprint of developed land in the state grew by 14.7% roughly double the state's rate of growth
- High density development buildings, parking lots and roads –
 covered an average of 12 acres of Connecticut every single day from
 1985 to 2002
- In that same time period Connecticut lost an average of 18 acres of forest each day

Source: UCONN Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)

 Connecticut lost 12% of its farmland between 1997-2002, the highest percentage loss for any state in the nation.

Source: USDA Agricultural Census 2002; CT Farm Bureau Association

Many DEP Programs Influence Land Use

- Aquifer Protection
- Land Acquisiton
- Forest Management
- Wetlands
- Water allocation
- Non-point source pollution
- Coastal Planning
- Stormwater Management
- Wastewater permitting
- Greenways
- Brownfields Remediation
- Endangered Species

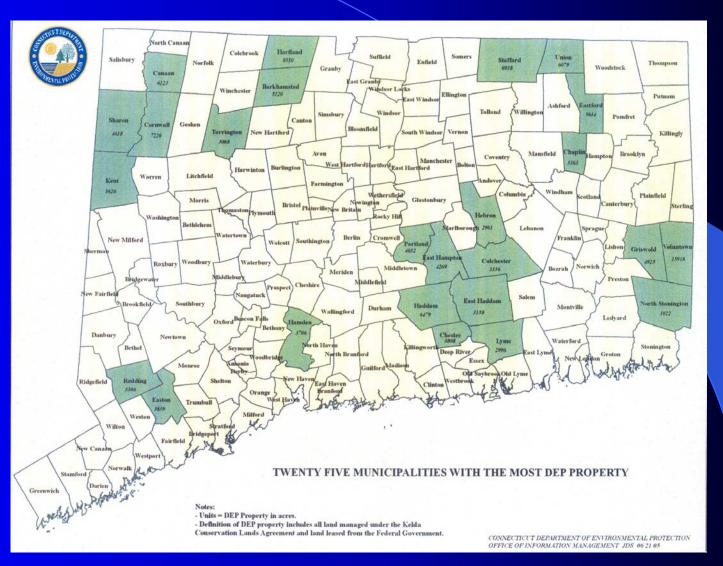
Program Elements

- Land use education partnerships
- Natural resource inventories
- Promote independent municipal conservation commissions or other local agency to lead on environmental issues
- Sustainable development liaison/circuit rider
- Biodiversity survey assistance
- Build out analyses
- Land management technical assistance for private forest lands and land trusts
- Assistance with DEP land use related permits
- Land Acquistion
- Support for inland wetland decision making

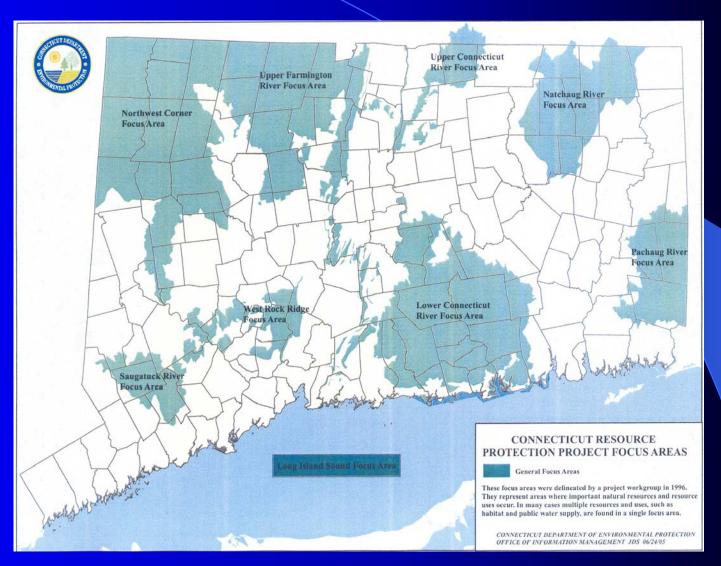
Focus Areas

- High percentage of preserved open space
- Sensitive resources (ridgelines, unusual habitats, large wetland areas, key river corridors)
- Overlapping resources
- Intense development pressure
- Urban areas

Potential Focus Areas



Potential Focus Areas



Urban Focus

- Parkland acquisition assistance (e.g. Mill River Park, Stamford)
- Urban forestry to abate air pollution, improve livability and promote experiences with nature
- Greenways to provide healthful outdoor recreation access to natural areas and alternative transportation routes
- Brownfield assistance to promote health, livability and jobs
- Pocket park development
- Access to rivers and other natural resources

Next Steps

- Steering committee (municipal officials, federal partners, advocacy groups, business leaders, planners, land use educators)
- Needs assessment (consultant)
- Establish partnerships
- Assemble staff team
- Develop program services and curricula

Results

- Better informed land use decisions
- Improved partnerships among players in conservation and development
- Increased awareness of natural resource values
- Greater capacity in local conservation advocates and municipalities
- DEP decisions more focused on broader landscape implications
- More livable communities